AKIRA 22™

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 22

BLOOD SIEGE

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Twenty thirty. The world stands poised at the edge of World War IV. An explosion of thermonuclear proportions has been set off in **Neo-Tokyo**. The world, particularly the superpowers, wonders what has happened. In **Neo-Tokyo**, in a section known as the "old city", a band of teen aged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounters **Number 26**, a child named **Takashi** who uses extra ordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends.

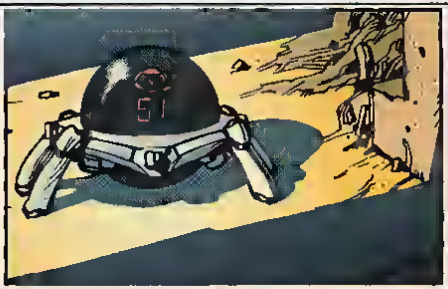
As a result, **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mys terious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities.

Among the resistance, **Kaneda** meets **Kay**, her "brother" **Ryu** and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Other important resistance leaders include Ryu's superior—the opposition leader **Nezu**—and a powerful religious leader with precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako**.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children under his control. Each child is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time **Lady Miyako** was **Number 19** in this series. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, murder ing one of Kaneda's friends and even attacking **Kaneda**. Then, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** seeks out **Akira**, whose powers he thinks may rival his own. When Tetsuo reaches Akira's resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within, and **Akira**—dazed and docile following his long sleep—emerges.

Akira **Kay** **The Colonel** **Chiyoko**

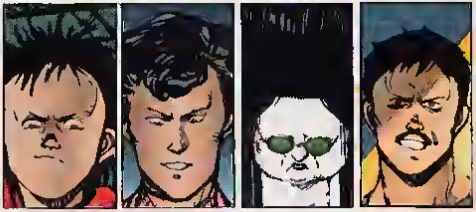


The **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but the laser strikes Tetsuo's left arm. **Neo-Tokyo** is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets, dealing harshly with the looters and restoring order.

Nezu betrays the resistance, planning to kidnap and exploit **Akira**. But he is thwarted first by a team of young psychics and then by **Ryu**, who guns his former master down. The resistance fighters and **Akira** are cornered by the Colonel's troops, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira** and reintroduces him to their fellow psychics **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**. Then **Nezu**, dying and determined for revenge, arrives and tries to kill **Akira**. He accidentally kills **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of Takashi's death galvanizes **Akira**, who fully awakens and unleashes a coherent light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city. Acting quickly **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward, and **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. In the wake of the disaster **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need, gathering large groups of followers in the East.

Neo-Tokyo is completely cut off from the outside world, and in the western part of the city the Great Tokyo Empire is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** on the throne and **Tetsuo**



Tetsuo | Tetsuo's Aide | Lady Miyako | Ryu

as his Prime Minister. The Empire is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies sent from outside to learn what is happening in the city.

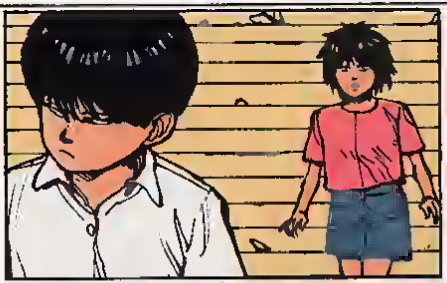
The **Colonel** is alone, living in hiding. **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels mental powers, and **Kiyoko** tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**. The two meet with **Lady Miyako**. She gives them medicine to help **Kiyoko** and **Masaru**, and asks that **Kay** bring the two psychics to her.

Most of the spies from the outside are hunted down and killed. Only their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, escapes. When Tetsuo's followers are on the verge of catching **Yamada** again, **Ryu** appears and leads him to safety. **Ryu** attempts to gain Yamada's trust, but the **Lieutenant** refuses to tell **Ryu** who has sent him or let **Ryu** join him. **Yamada** does, however, reveal that Russia has conquered part of Japan, and that the Americans' fear of **Akira** makes them reluctant to get involved.

Three young girls are taken from the breadline and given to **Tetsuo** for his pleasure. He orders the girls to swallow capsules of mind-altering drugs. Only one girl—**Kaori**—who palms her capsule, survives. Under the influence of the drugs, **Tetsuo** relives his past. He sees visions of the present and the possible future as well. Afterwards, believing that his mental resonance with **Akira** is responsible for the odd mental voyage, **Tetsuo** looks into the mind of his Emperor. He emerges a withdrawn, shuddering wreck. Once recovered, **Tetsuo** decides that **Lady Miyako**—whose mind he also briefly touched—may be able to explain matters to him. Taking a hefty dose of power-enhancing medication, **Tetsuo** teleports to the temple of the religious leader. **Lady Miyako** recounts to him the experiments decades earlier which created the numbered psychics from human children. She states that the designations in the twenties were reserved for those of the greatest power. **Lady Miyako** also reveals that World War III began with a mental blast from **Akira** which destroyed Tokyo and killed the scientist who created the psychics. Finally she warns **Tetsuo** that he alone can control Akira's near-inconceivable powers, but must first give up the drug crutch. Disgusted and perplexed, **Tetsuo** departs.

Kay and **Chiyoko** try to

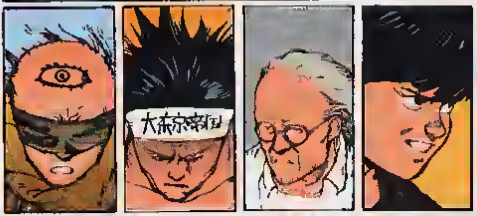
Lt. Yamada | Kaori | Masaru | Kiyoko



move **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** to Lady Miyako's temple. They are attacked by Tetsuo's followers, who escape with **Kiyoko**. **Chiyoko** rescues the girl, but is badly wounded. **Chiyoko** and **Kiyoko** are brought to safety by the **Colonel**, who is living in isolation while the last of his scientists attempts to re-establish contact with the SOL satellite. **Chiyoko**, delirious, tells the **Colonel** to take the child to Lady Miyako's temple, where he'll also find **Masaru**. The **Colonel** departs in a caretaker robot with **Kiyoko**. Meanwhile, with the assistance of Lady Miyako's monks, **Kay** eludes a street gang and safely conveys **Masaru** to the temple. There **Lady Miyako** mysteriously alludes to **Kaneda** and informs **Kay** that although **Kay** herself lacks intrinsic psychic gifts, she serves as a powerful medium for the talents of others.

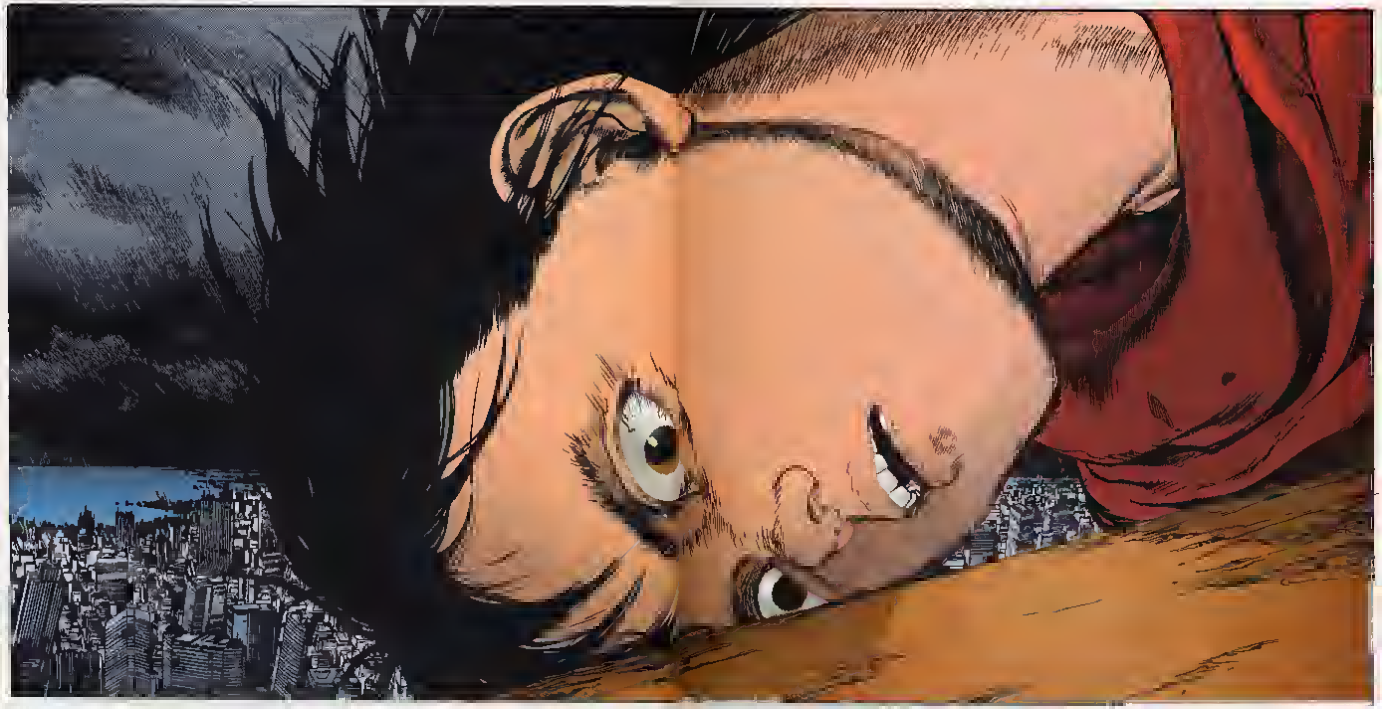
Ryu and **Yamada** watch the Empire from hiding. They move in when Tetsuo's dapper assistant—disgusted by Tetsuo's lack of interest in the way **Lady Miyako** has thwarted their schemes—leads most of the Empire's men out as an army. **Ryu** and **Yamada** are startled by an encounter with **Tetsuo**, whose withdrawal causes his power to surge erratically. **Ryu** is even more startled when **Tetsuo** blurts out what his telepathy has shown him—that **Yamada** had come to assassinate **Akira**.

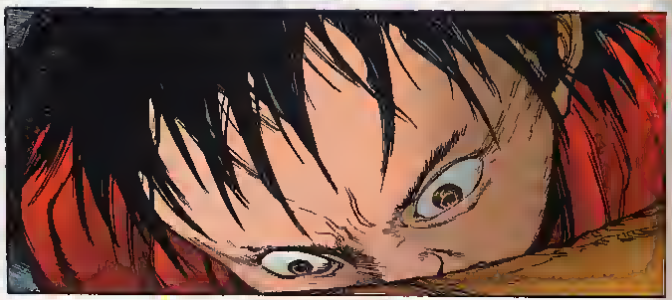
Tetsuo's assistant leads his army to Lady Miyako's temple. The army slaughters all in its path—monks, penitents and helpless refugees alike—determined to kill **Lady Miyako** and capture **Kay** and **Masaru**.

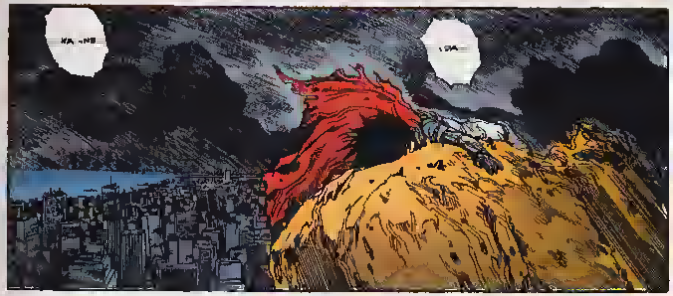


Seer | Enforcer | Scientist | Kaneda

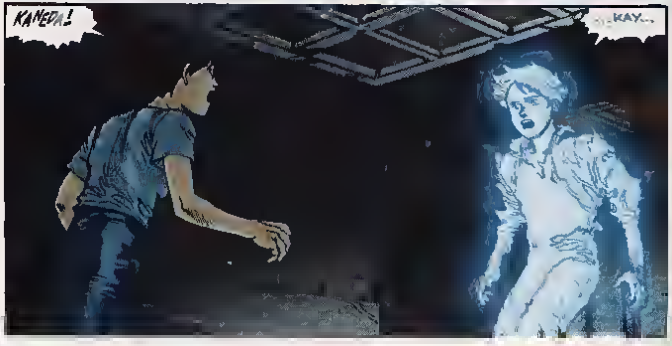
!
BLAM
BLAM BLAM
SLUMP
TAK
klak
SNAP
KEEEEEEEE
!
THAT SOUND!
EEEEEEEEE

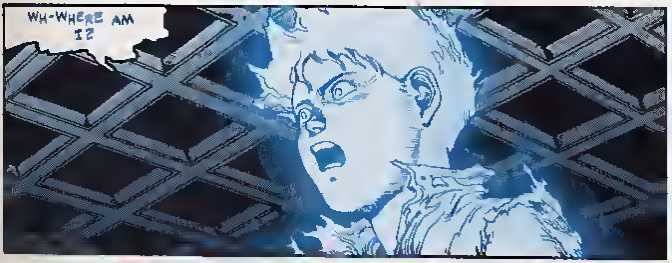






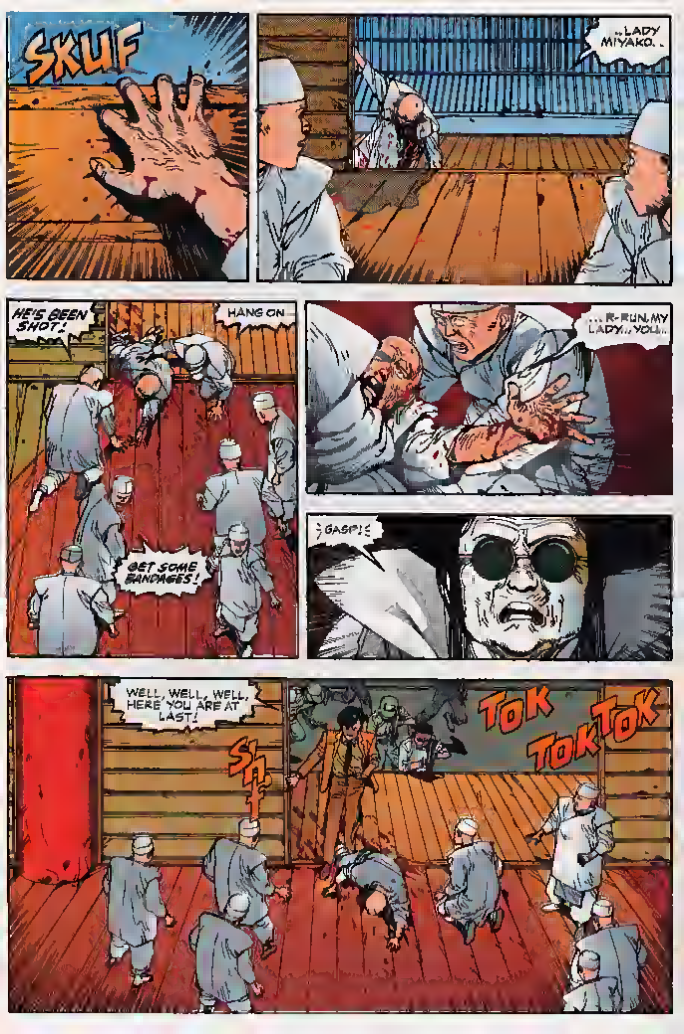
KEELEEN

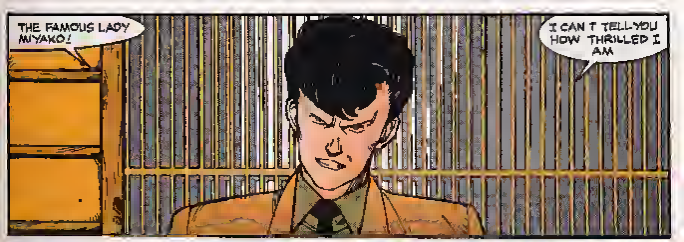

KANEDA!
...KAY...


WH-WHERE AM I?

WAIT!
KR EEEEN

WAIT!


SKUF
..LADY MIYAKO..
HE'S BEEN SHOT!
HANG ON
GET SOME BANDAGES!
...R-RUN, MY LADY... YOU...
¡GASP!¿
WELL, WELL, WELL, HERE YOU ARE AT LAST!
SHIT
TOK
TOK
TOK


THE FAMOUS LADY MIYAKO!
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW THRILLED I AM

TERRORIST PIGS!
STAY BACK!

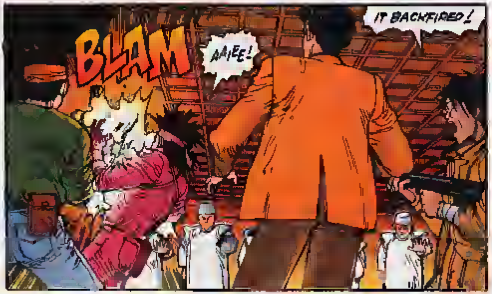
LIKE YOU CAN MAKE US!
WHERE ARE THE WOMAN AND THE KID?!

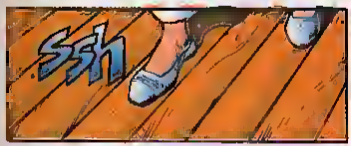
DON'T TALK IF YOU DON'T WANT TO WE'LL KILL YOU NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY

THIS ACHIEVES NOTHING!
WE DO THIS FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF MY LORD AKIRA AND MASTER TETSUO!
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?
DON'T PLAY GAMES! THE ONLY GLORY THAT INTERESTS YOU IS YOUR OWN!
WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT IT ANYWAY?!
YEAH!
YOU'RE LUNCH MEAT, GRANNY
KUT
?
WHAT TH--?!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE DAMN GUNS?
?

HEY!

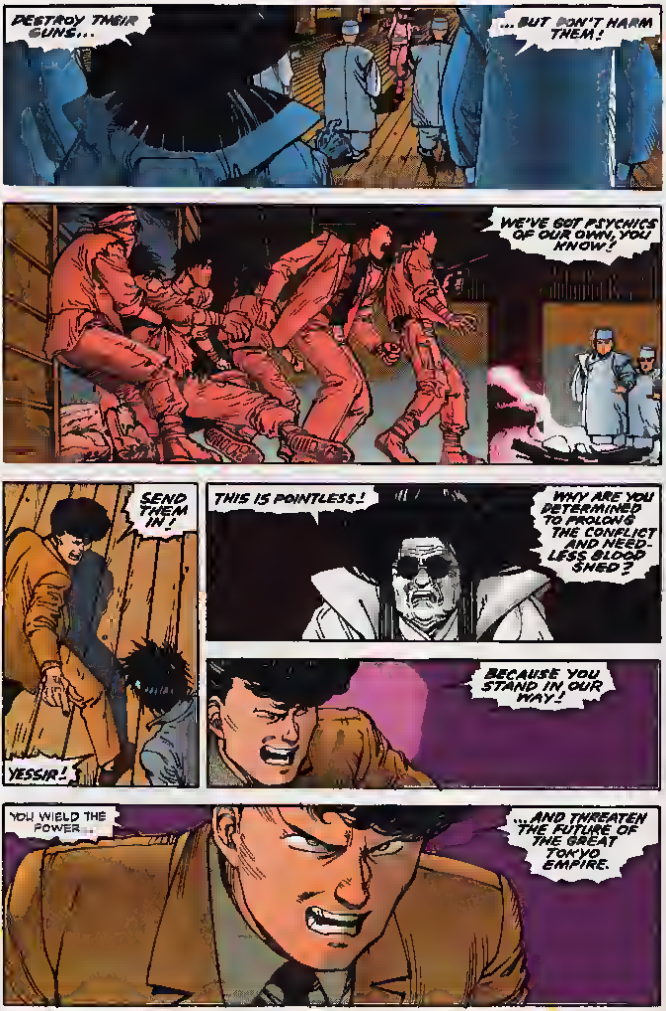
HAVE YOU CLOWNS GOT THE POWER?!


BLAM
AAIEE!
IT BACKFIRED!


Ssh

BLAM
!

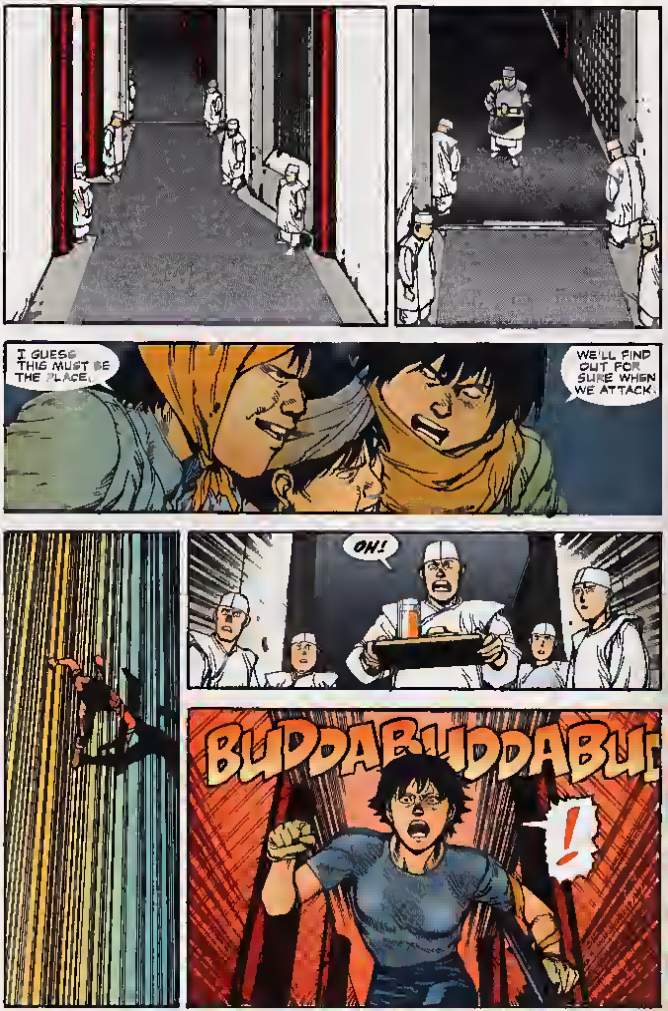
STAND YOUR GROUND!
USE YOUR BARE HANDS IF YOU HAVE TO!


DESTROY THEIR GUNS...
...BUT DON'T HARM THEM!
WE'VE GOT PSYCHICS OF OUR OWN, YOU KNOW!
SEND THEM IN!
YESSIR!
THIS IS POINTLESS!
WHY ARE YOU DETERMINED TO PROLONG THE CONFLICT AND NEEDLESS BLOOD SHED?
BECAUSE YOU STAND IN OUR WAY!
YOU WIELD THE POWER
...AND THREATEN THE FUTURE OF THE GREAT TOKYO EMPIRE.

RRUP
NOOO!
WAIT!
LEAVE HER ALONE!
YOU SON OF A BITCH!
YOU'RE DEAD!
KLAK
HUNH?
KLAT KLAT
AUGH!
BAM
NOW WHAT?

MY EYES--!
WHO IN HELL--?
HM?
...UH... HN...
YOU BASTARD!
KLAT
NOW!
GET HIM!
W-WAIT--!
KILL THEM!
KLK-KLK
AVENGE OUR FRIENDS!
REMEMBER US TO HELL!
THD
OH PRIEST ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

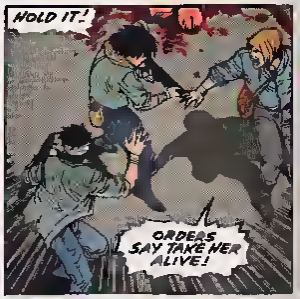
FIND THE KID!
NAH! NOTHIN' BACK THAT WAY BUT RUINS
PLACE IS LIKE A BIG MUSEUM
OVER HERE!
YOU FIND 'EM?
LET'S GO BACK FOR MORE ORDERS
SSSH!
BE QUIET!
LOOK AT THAT!

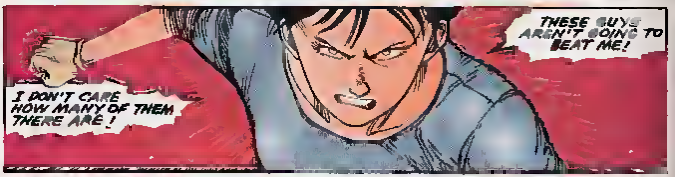

I GUESS THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.
WE'LL FIND OUT FOR SURE WHEN WE ATTACK.
ON!
BUDDABUDDABU
!

THOP
SPUSH
SEE IF THERE'S ANYONE INSIDE.
...OHH...
DON'T YOU KNOW YOU'RE DEAD?!
!
BLAM
BLAM
ONE OF US ?
SOMEONE'S COMING!

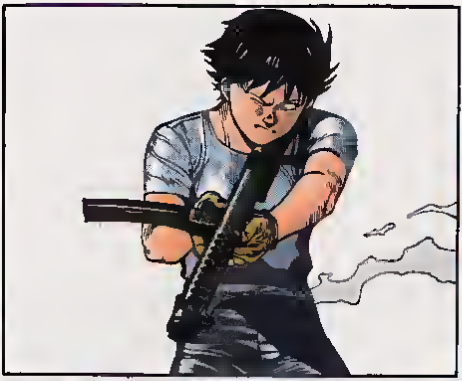
NO!
IT'S A WOMAN...
A WOMAN WITH A GUN!

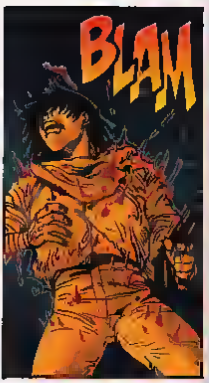
!

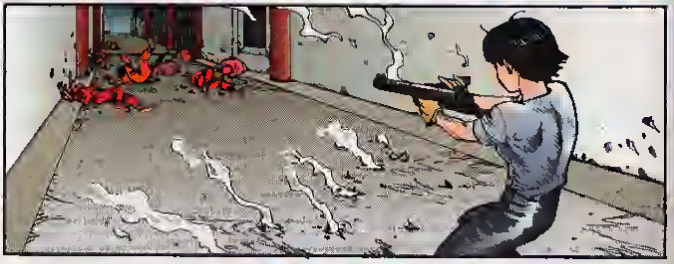

HOLD IT!
ORDERS SAY TAKE HER ALIVE!


I DON'T CARE HOW MANY OF THEM THERE ARE!
THESE GUYS AREN'T GOING TO BEAT ME!

BACK OFF, STUPID, OR SHE'LL GET YOU!
WHAT'LL WE DO?
BUDDA BUD
WHA--
DEFEND OURSELVES!
HER LEG! SHOOT HER IN THE LEG!
BUDDA
EEP!
BUDDA
BUDDA
BITCH!



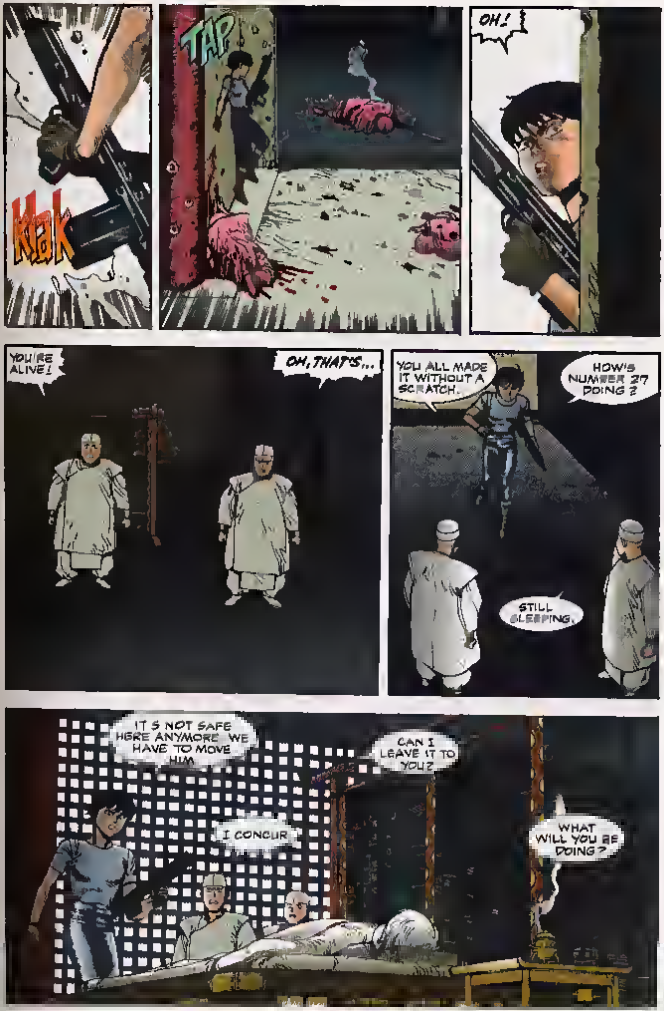

BLAM



PUFF
PUFF
PUFF

GASP

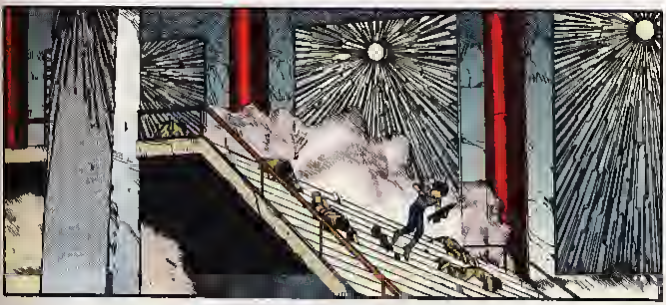
NUMBER 27!
KA-THUD

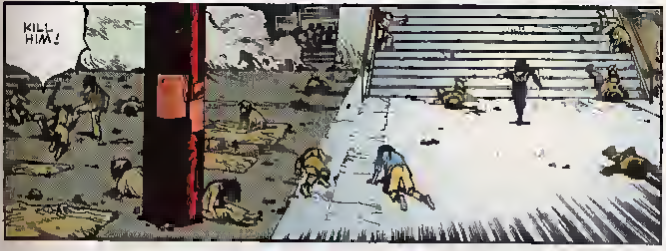

KNK
THP
OH!
YOU'RE ALIVE!
OH, THAT'S...
YOU ALL MADE IT WITHOUT A SCRATCH.
HOW'S NUMBER 27 DOING?
STILL SLEEPING.
IT'S NOT SAFE HERE ANYMORE. WE HAVE TO MOVE HIM.
I CONCUR
CAN I LEAVE IT TO YOU?
WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING?

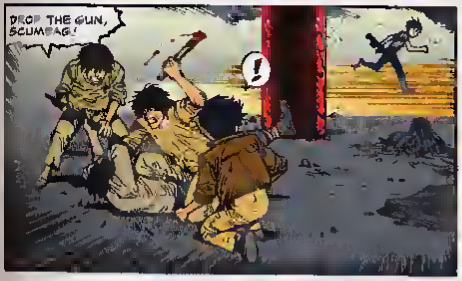
ME 2
I'M COMING BACK!
...TO HELP NUMBER 1!
OOWAAAAH!
EEK!
A-AHHH!

KRAK
AUGH!
CONCENTRATE! WE MUST MAINTAIN THE FLOW OF ENERGY!
YESS!
WHOOAA!

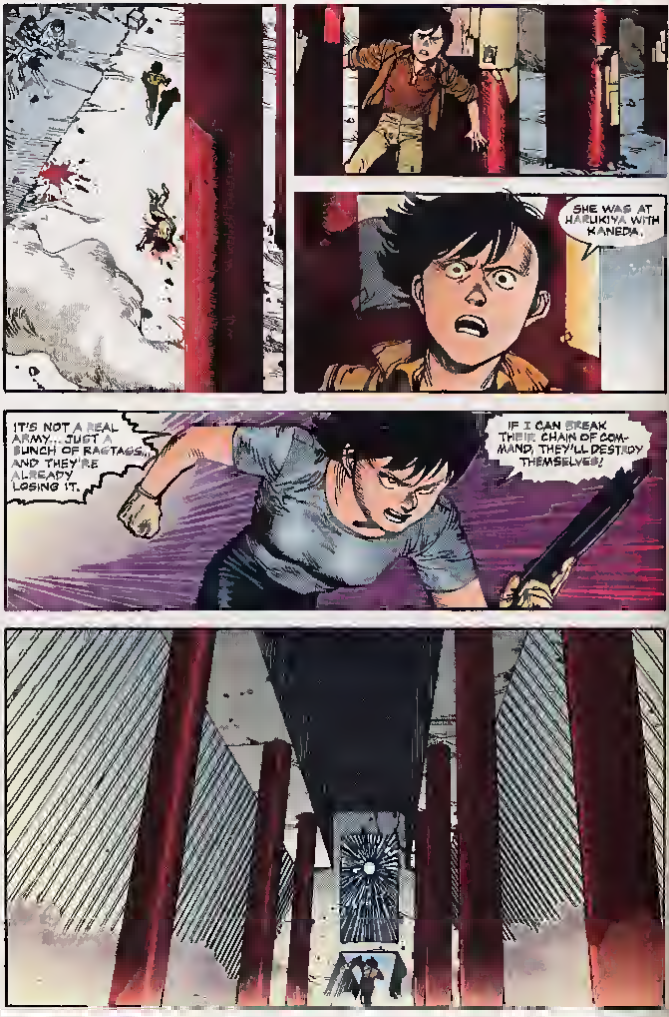
KRAK
GET THE NEXT ONE!
RIGHT!
TAKE THIS!




KILL HIM!


DROP THE GUN, SCUMBAG!
!

THAT GIRL...!
THIS TO YOUR STINKING EMPIRE!

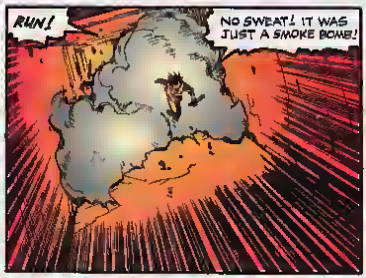

SHE WAS AT HARUKIYA WITH KANEDA.
IT'S NOT A REAL ARMY... JUST A BUNCH OF RAGTAGS... AND THEY'RE ALREADY LOSING IT.
IF I CAN BREAK THEIR CHAIN OF COMMAND, THEY'LL DESTROY THEMSELVES!

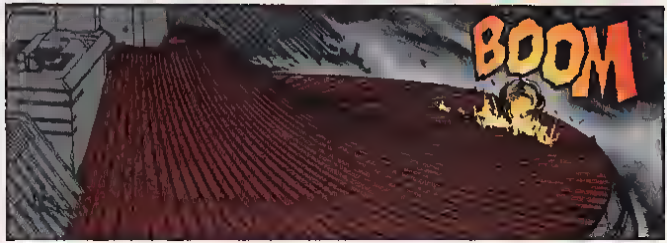
BLAM BLAM
WHOOAAA!
AREN'T YOU GUYS AFRAID OF DYING?
PING
PON
OW!
WHAT?!
HAAH!
CLASH

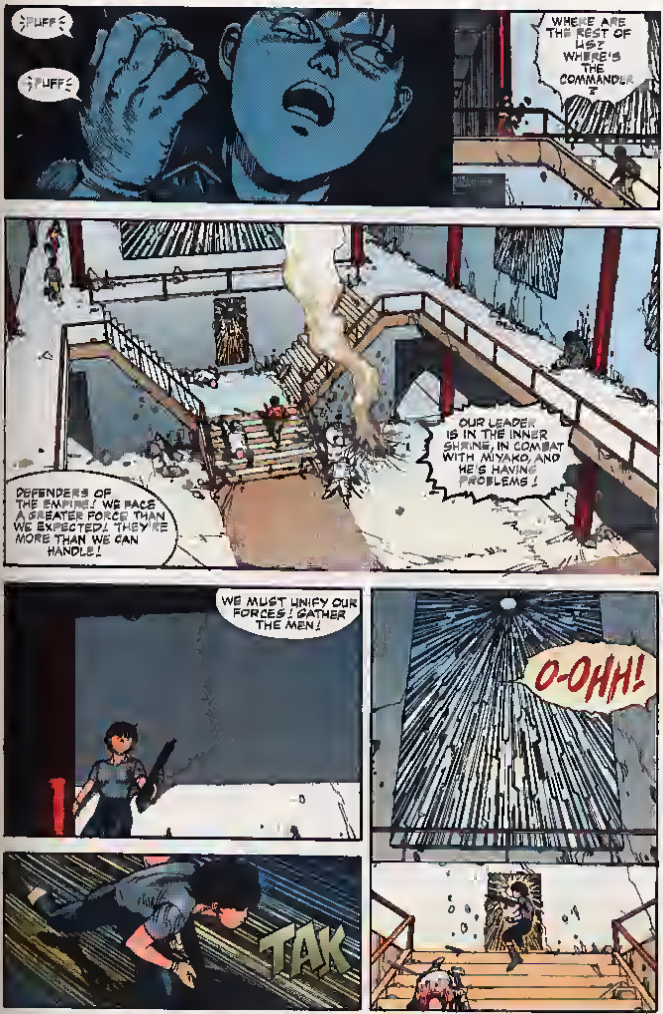
KEEP BACK!
RETREAT! RETREAT!
CHARGE!

POP

HOLD IT!
YIKES!
FFSSS


RUN!
NO SWEAT! IT WAS JUST A SMOKE BOMB!


BOOM


PUFF
PUFF
WHERE ARE THE REST OF US? WHERE'S THE COMMANDER?
DEFENDERS OF THE EMPIRE! WE FACE A GREATER FORCE THAN WE EXPECTED! THEY'RE MORE THAN WE CAN HANDLE!
OUR LEADER IS IN THE INNER SHRINE, IN COMBAT WITH MIYAKO, AND HE'S HAVING PROBLEMS!
WE MUST UNIFY OUR FORCES! GATHER THE MEN!
O-OHH!
TAK

OOAAAAH!
...?!...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?
GET UP!
GET UP AND KILL HIM!
OOA-AH...
LOOK!
MOST OF THEM ARE ALMOST DEAD ALREADY!

O-OAA...AH...
GOOD! THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!
U-UH... UH...
BAD NEWS, COMMANDER!
?!
PUFF!
PUFF!
THE MONKS AND THE REFUGEES ARE AFTER US!
SAY WHAT?!
WHAT'LL WE DO?!
SHUT UP!
THE ATTACK FAILED. YOU SHOULD SURRENDER
WHAT?!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
HE'S NOT ONE OF US!
TOK
WHA..?
THAM
GO. DAMN!
A WOMAN!
BAM
DROP YOUR WEAPONS AND GET OUT OF HERE!
DO-OOH!
IT'S HER
ANYBODY MOVES I FIRE!

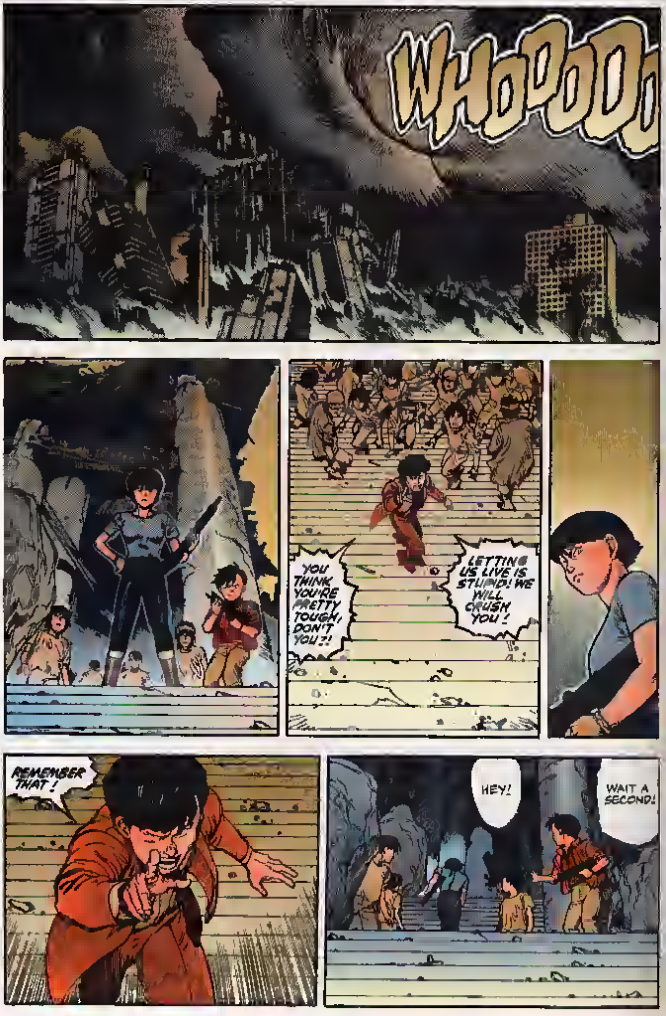
AND IF YOU DON'T CLEAR OUT SOON, I'LL FIRE ANYWAY.
...AH...UH...
BUT... BUT...
tap
!
YOU MUSTN'T KILL HIM!
KAY!
DON'T SHOOT!
BUDDA
BUDDA
HOLD YOUR FIRE! YOU'VE CONVINCED ME!
STOP!
THROW DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND GO!

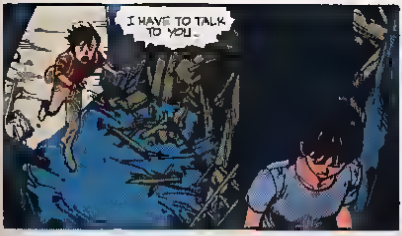
tu-WHEET
WHAT THE?
WHU'SAT SOUND?
YOU HEAR THAT?
YEAH...
THEY WANT US TO ASSEMBLE.
'STHE ATTACK OVER?
HELP WITH THE WOUNDED!
HURAY!

LOUSY...
HOLD IT!
TELL THEM TO DROP THEIR GUNS.
LISTEN, STUPIDS!
!

DON'T YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE BEATEN?!
BEATEN...?
HAVE WE BEEN BEATEN?
I GUESS SO..
NOW DROP THOSE GUNS BEFORE WE KILL YOUR LEADER--
--AND KICK YOUR BUTTS AGAIN!
KLUNK
SKUFF RATTLE
WE'RE SORRY SIR! THE JOB WAS TOO MUCH FOR US!
DON'T THINK YOU'VE BEATEN US! WE'LL KEEP SENDING TROOPS TILL YOU'RE ALL DEAD!
I'M TERRIFIED!
NEXT TIME TELL TETSUO TO COME IN PERSON!

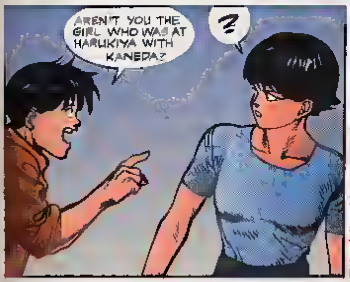
WHOOOO
WOOOOOO


WHOOOO
YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY TOUGH, DON'T YOU?!
LETTING US LIVE IS STUPID! WE WILL CRUSH YOU!
REMEMBER THAT!
HEY!
WAIT A SECOND!


I HAVE TO TALK TO YOU.

...BUT THAT'S NOT MY--!
NEVER MIND THAT! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?

I KNOW.
IT WOULD BE SAFER FOR US TO JUST KILL THEM...


AREN'T YOU THE GIRL WHO WAS AT HARUKIYA WITH KANEDA?
?

OH!

I WAS THERE, TOO, WITH YAMAGATA AND SOME OF THE OTHERS.

YOU'RE ALIVE!
SO ARE YOU!

THE WOUNDED WILL HAVE TO WAIT. PUTTING OUT THE FIRE HAS TO BE OUR FIRST PRIORITY.
BRING SOME WATER!
¡AA-AUGHH!

THE ARMY CAUGHT UP WITH ME AROUND PIER TWELVE AND THREW ME INTO A REFORM SCHOOL.

BEING IN THERE SAVED MY ASS.

IT ALL SEEMS SO FAR AWAY NOW... LIKE ANOTHER LIFE

Y KNOW THOSE GUYS WILL BE BACK

I'LL HELP YOU WHEN THEY DO.

AND I'VE GOT FRIENDS

FRIENDS, I WAS PART OF A PRETTY TOUGH GROUP MYSELF, ONCE... WITH THINGS TO FIGHT FOR GOALS WE BELIEVED IN...
NOW, NOTHING MAKES SENSE. IT'S LIKE THE DISASTER SWEPT EVERYONE'S IDEALS AND PRINCIPLES AWAY, AND EVERYONE JUST KEEPS KILLING EACH OTHER.
I'D LIKE TO LEAVE THIS CITY BEHIND.
ME, TOO.
THERE'S PLENTY OF US WHO FEEL THE SAME WAY.
BUT WE CAN'T JUST ABANDON NEO TOKYO.
DAMN TETSUO!

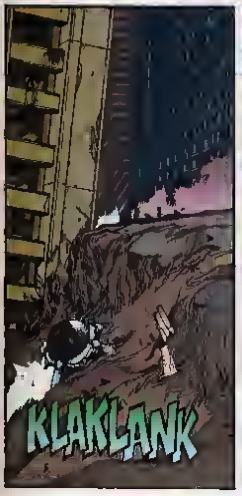
WE CAN'T GO ANYWHERE UNTIL WE TAKE CARE OF HIM!
WE HAVE TO SETTLE THAT SCORE...
HUH?
UH... BY THE WAY... WHAT BECAME OF KANEDA?
HE WAS... RIGHT AT THE HEART OF WHERE IT HAPPENED.
I DON'T THINK HE HAD TIME TO GET AWAY.
K-KANEDA...DEAD? I DIDN'T THINK THAT COULD EVER HAPPEN.
UH...
WHAT?
DID YOU TWO EVER DO IT?
OH, COME ON! NOT YOU, TOO.

WE WERE FRIENDS... JUST FRIENDS...
JUST FRIENDS?
SHHFE
THIS IS VERY EMWARRASS-ING.
HEY, DON'T BE SAD. MAYBE HE LOVED YOU, TOO.
WHAT?
NOT THAT IT MATTERS NOW, ANYWAY.
HUH?
LET'S GO
WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO.
TOK

I'M KAI.
KAI... AND MY NAME IS KAY. AND YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.
IF I QUIT NOW...
...I BETRAY EVERYTHING MY FRIENDS AND I WERE FIGHTING FOR.
LET'S MOVE!

SOLDIERS! WE NEED A LOT MORE SOLDIERS!
AND GUNS!
AND BULLETS! AND BAZOOKAS! AND MISSILES! THAT'S THE TICKET!

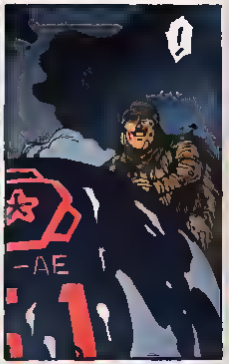
THEY MADE FOOLS OF OUR EMPIRE!
WE'RE GOING BACK THERE IN ONE HOUR!


KLAKLANK

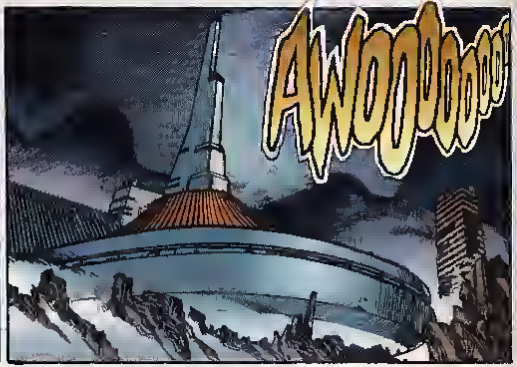
KLUNK
WHAT'S WRONG?! KEEP GOING!

klaklank

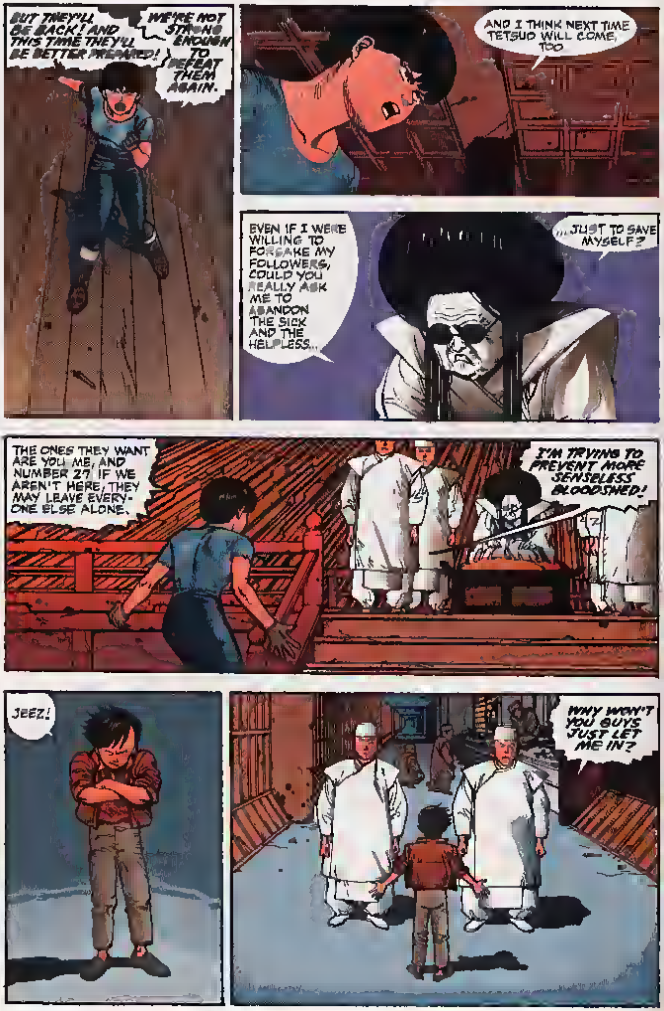
HWOM


!

FORWARD!


AWOOOOOOO!

GET THE FIRE OUT!
WHERE'S THE WATER?!
BRING A STRETCHER!
ABSOLUTELY NOT!
I SHALL NOT LEAVE HERE!
I NEVER WILL!


BUT THEY'LL BE BACK! AND THIS TIME THEY'LL BE BETTER PREPARED!
WE'RE NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO DEFEAT THEM AGAIN.
AND I THINK NEXT TIME TETSUO WILL COME, TOO
EVEN IF I WERE WILLING TO FORSAKE MY FOLLOWERS, COULD YOU REALLY ASK ME TO ABANDON THE SICK AND THE HELPLESS...
...JUST TO SAVE MYSELF?
THE ONES THEY WANT ARE YOU, ME, AND NUMBER 27. IF WE AREN'T HERE, THEY MAY LEAVE EVERYONE ELSE ALONE.
I'M TRYING TO PREVENT MORE SENSELESS BLOODSHED!
JEEZ!
WHY WON'T YOU GUYS JUST LET ME IN?

NUMBER 27 AND I WILL REMAIN HERE.
IT WAS NO SERIES OF RANDOM ACCIDENTS THAT BROUGHT US ALL TOGETHER HERE.
WE MUST PERMIT DESTINY TO FOLLOW ITS COURSE.
IT WOULD BE A WASTE FOR YOU TO DIE HERE!
THIS IS HARDLY A SIMPLE QUESTION OF...
TROUBLE WITH RELIGIOUS GUYS IS YOU JUST CAN'T ARGUE WITH 'EM.
THEY'VE ALWAYS GOT GOD ON THEIR SIDE TELLIN' 'EM THEY'RE RIGHT
HUNH?

HOLY SHIT!
ALREADY?!
WHAT CAN I SAY TO CONVINCE YOU?
KAY!
!
WHAT IS IT?
THEY'RE BAA-AACK!

SHOOM
UPWIND! START UPWIND OF THEM!
BURN IT ALL DOWN!
WHERE'S THE EXTRA GUNS AND AMMO?
AND THE REIN-FORCEMENTS?
HURRY!
YOU SOLDIERS MUST HURRY! IT'S VITAL TO OUR EMPIRE!

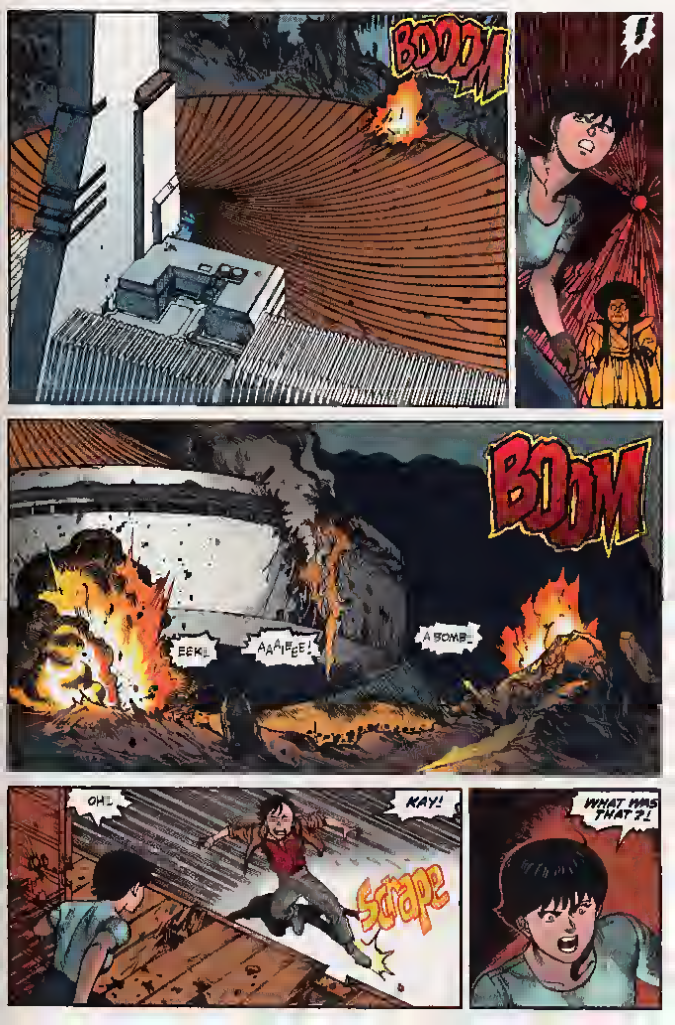
WHAT IS THIS?
DRRRN
EH?
drrrn
IT'S ALL RIGHT! KEEP GOING!
RRRRN

RRRRRN
WHOA!
NUMBER 46'S MEN.
AND THEY'RE ARMED.
OW!
HEY!
ALMOST THERE!
LOOK OUT!
TURN HERE!
TO THE SHRINE!
LET'S GET THAT MIYAKO!

LADY MIYAKO!
HELP US!
QUIT SHOVING!
YOU PUSHED ME FIRST!
THAT BASTARD!
OH, SHIT!
YOU KNOW, ONCE THEY ARRIVE, WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SORT OUT THE REFUGEES FROM THE ENEMY.
!
DAMN!
LET'S GO BACK!
LET US THROUGH!

SMAT
klik
klak
@OTCHA BULLETS RIGHT HERE!
DON'T THROW THE BOXES, YOU MORON!
HERE!
ARE THERE MEN POSTED AT THE BRIDGE?
YESSIR! WITH A PILE OF EXPLOSIVES AND A DETONATOR!
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS, COMMANDER.
WE HAVE A NUMBER OF THEM
GRENADES AND HEAT-SEAKING MISSILES, AS WELL
GOOD
TIME FOR THE SECOND ROUND

MOVE THE REFUGEES TO OTHER LEVELS. I WANT THEM OFF THIS FLOOR! AND CLEAR AN ESCAPE ROUTE!
YOU THINK SOME OF THEM MIGHT BE AMONG THE REFUGEES?
YEG!
AND BRING NUMBER 27 IN HERE.
HURRY!
...A-AA...AH...
NUMBER 19.
IF YOU REALLY FEEL YOU CAN'T LEAVE, I'LL TAKE NUMBER 27 AND GO.
KAY. CAN'T YOU FEEL THE BUILD OF TENSION AND ENERGY?
ENERGY?
I FEEL AS THOUGH MY CHEST MIGHT COLLAPSE


BOOM!
!
BOOM
EEK!
AAIEEE!
A BOMB!
OH!
KAY!
Scrape
WHAT WAS THAT?!

THEY'VE BLOWN THE BUBBLE FOR THE FIRST CHARGE!
WHAT'LL WE DO?
GETTING OUT WILL BE TOUGH
DOWNSTAIRS IS A ZOO. IF WE TRY TO GET OUT THROUGH THAT PANIC WE COULD GET TRAMPLED.
AND THERE ARE ALREADY SOME REFUGEES IN HERE BELOW US.
SINCE WE DON'T HAVE ANY REAL WAY OF HOLDING THEM BACK, THEY COULD BE IN HERE IN A FEW MINUTES.
WHATEVER HAPPENS, WE DON'T HAVE LONG.
AS SOON AS THEY BRING NUMBER 27 IN, WE'D BETTER MAKE OUR MOVE.
WHERE TO?
UP.
FROM THE TOWER...
WE'LL BE ABLE TO SPOT ANYONE WHO TRIES TO GET NEAR US.
EVEN IF NUMBER 19 WON'T COME, I THINK SHE'D APPRECIATE IT IF WE TOOK CARE OF NUMBER 27.

NEXT ISSUE! **AKIRA'S RAIN**

AKIRA: The Movie Katsuhiro Otomo talks about the animated film.

"I wanted to make a movie that would be a jumble of images. Instead of just showing the highlights of each scene I wanted to show the details, and if such details could be seen as a mosaic of the whole, and in retrospect, if the viewer could recall the movie in that way then that would fit my intention."

"That's why I created Neo-Tokyo to frame and enhance the image I had of **AKIRA**. Although the movie's title is the name of a child, in fact it does not revolve around any single character. No one person is the main character, yet it is possible for many to be seen as such. All people have drama in their lives so the plot is simply the intermingling of many such dramas."

"The final sequences for this movie were intended for the original story. I had expected for a long time to end the story with a nostalgic conversation between Kaneda and Tetsuo. In the original story, however I was unable to control that because the characters seemed to go their own way. Once they gain their own momentum it is difficult even for the creator to halt them—so the ending must be planned well in advance."

One of the problems I had in creating this movie was connecting the scenes. Although I had sufficient images from the script to cover the major scenes, the problem was linking the ones leading to the climax. Another problem was the flow or tempo of the story. Because the movie had to fit within a framework of two hours, it was important not to waste any time when cutting to other scenes. In comic stories, one is allowed greater freedom to digress, but if you try the same thing in a movie, it loses its clarity and sharpness.

"When I was working on the storyboards, I kept the consideration of animation always in mind, but it was very difficult. There were so many simple scenes, such as a character walking toward the camera, which makes things difficult. On TV the camera can pan to the upper sections, but in this movie the character's whole body had to be in view and its movements had to seem lifelike. The many such supposedly simple scenes like these created the greatest problems for me."

"In the final sequences, which feature Tetsuo's transformation, a lot of the action can only be captured by animation. To show such scenes with a sense of realism depends a lot on the appearance of the backgrounds. If a comic character is established from the beginning, even realistic endings do not change that first impression. The viewer suspends disbelief in the character and is not surprised by anything that happens. For example, in order to show spectacular scenes or extraordinary powers, the artist has to depict normal backgrounds and scenes with a great sense of reality. In so doing, the scenes of devastation take on an added sense of realism. I also pay much attention to the value of artwork and color in enhancing reality."

"I feel that everyone does this in all movies; if the audience doesn't believe in the character, then the movie will be a failure. So it is very necessary to create a sense of reality for the story to develop."

AKIRA: the movie
AN UPDATE

Upcoming **AKIRA** dates include:

BOSTON AREA
BROOKLINE, MA
COOLIDGE CORNER MOVIEHOUSE
August 31—September 13

KEENE, NH
PUTNAM SCREENING ROOM
September 7—9

WICHITA, KS
NORTH ROCK SIX
September 13

WATERVILLE, ME
RAILROAD SQUARE CINEMA
September 14—20

NORTHAMPTON, MA
PLEASANT STREET THEATER
September 19—25

Also, look for **AKIRA** in New York City at the New Film Forum in early Fall!

KATSUHIRO OTOMO
writer/illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE
chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI
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Kodansha Ltd.

YOKO UMEZAWA
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YUKA ANDO
editorial coordinator • Tokyo

NORIYUKI OKAZAKI
managing editor • New York

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY
english adaptation

STEVE OLIFF
with the
OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW
colorists

MICHAEL HIGGINS
letterer

STEVE ALEXANOROV
production

MARIE JAVINS
assistant editor

MARGARET CLARK
editor

CARL POTTS
executive editor

Amidst the chaos still roiling through Neo Tokyo Lady Miyako's temple was once a refuge, a place of comfort and healing for the troubled injured masses Once but no more—now it is a trap four walls that allow no escape from Tetsuo's aide and the army he's assembled to advance his own power The army drives forward ruthlessly, intent on seizing Kay and the psychic child Masaru crushing back Lady Miyako and her monks—modern weaponry against mental telepathy, the only common ground between the pool of red spreading out around them both

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

2 4885 23066